

Air Force Prime Time, a weekly news magazine for and about airmen stationed overseas, airs Thursday evenings at 8:25 p.m. Central Euro-pean Time on AFN tele-vision. In this week's edition...three stories cover aid in Cameroon, Africa; another looks at full-day kindergarten classes at Department of Defense Schools.

Eifel Times

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Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany

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Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios
Slovak air force Col. Juraj Baranek, (left) 33rd Air Force Base Malacky, greets Brig. Gen. Don Hoffman, 52nd Fighter Wing commander, after he arrived in Slovakia Saturday.

Spangdahlem lands in Slovakia

By 1st Lt. Angela Johnson
52nd Fighter Wing public affairs

Twelve F-16s and more than 200 U.S. airmen from Spangdahlem Air Base arrived in Slovakia Saturday to train with their counterparts from the Slovak air force.

The deployment marks the first time U.S. warplanes have been allowed to train over what was once part of communist Czechoslovakia.

Lt. Col. Richard Reynolds, 23rd Fighter Squadron commander, in the squadron flagship led the first wave of six jets to land. Brig. Gen. Don Hoffman, 52nd Fighter Wing commander, and Col. Michael Beard, 52nd Operations Group commander, followed Reynolds to the ground in the second and third jet.

Crew chiefs on the ground greeted the aircraft as if they were The Thunderbirds. Awaiting dignitaries and about 50 media outlets were awed by the precision displayed by the U.S. pilots and ground crew.

Following the arrival, a formal ceremony took place to mark the historic occasion. Three flights of Slovak troops, three flights of U.S. troops, a Slovak military band and a reviewing party made up of Lt. Gen. Milan Cerovsky, Slovak Chief of General Staff, Hoffman and Col. Juraj Baranek, 33rd Air Force Base Malacky commander. Hoffman used the opportunity to thank the Slovaks for inviting them to Malacky and providing first-class hospitality.

After the ceremony, a press conference ensued with reporters from throughout Europe, including the Czech Republic, Hungary and Belgium.



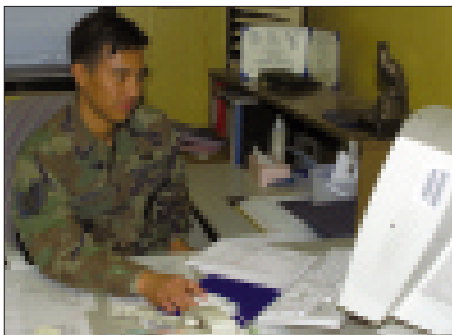
Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios
Lt. Col. Richard Reynolds, 23rd Fighter Squadron commander, is the first to land on Slovak soil Saturday.

"We're excited to be here," Reynolds said in response to a question from the media. "This deployment gives us the opportunity to meet with the Slovak pilots and share tactics, techniques and procedures while developing camaraderie and friendship to last a lifetime."

About 220 Spangdahlem troops representing 29 different career fields are deployed there for the two-week weapons training.

"We hope to increase our proficiency in basic range and bombing events by dropping practice bombs on targets at the nearby Kuychna range, something we're not able to do in Germany because of the weather," said Capt. Jeff Zupon, 23rd Fighter Squadron pilot. "We'll

See Slovakia, Page 2



Airman 1st Class Kimberlie Drews

STEP in the right direction

Tech. Sgt. Jerry Orona, 52nd Logistics Support Squadron F-16 maintenance instructor, works at his computer. The 12-year Air Force veteran was promoted by Brig. Gen. Don Hoffman, 52nd Fighter Wing commander, March 29 through the Stripes to Exceptional Performers program. Born in Tokyo, Japan, Orona has a wife, Mika, and three children.

Class graduates

By Staff Sgt. Mary Sneed
 Airman Leadership School

Senior Airman Deborah A. Blaylock came away with top honors among 38 students graduating from Airman Leadership School, Class 00-4.

During the graduation ceremony March 30, the 470th Air Base Squadron airman received the John Levitow Award.

Other senior airmen earning awards from the class are distinguished graduates Todd W. Mickel, 852nd Munitions Support Squadron, Kristofer J. Miller, 752nd MUNSS, with the leadership award going to Michael Long, U.S. Air Forces in Europe detachment 6. Senior airmen graduating were:

■**Eagle flight:** Nathaniel Cruz, flight leader, Christine L. Christie, Matthew P. Green, Richard B. Henry, Joel D. Jones, Kendall Ross Kirk, Chira T. Martin, James Maynard, Matthew M. Mullen, Dominic Murphy, Chad G. Rasmussen, Jay Edmond Turcotte and Richard W. Weber.

■**Falcon flight:** Charles E. Burchess, class leader, Algene Bailey III, Debbie M. Clements, Todd Frederick Dittmer, Erich Marc Freundner, Allison Rae Keers-Sanchez, Jason E. Loughrey, Terri L. Reed, Stuart Wayne Richardson and Guadalupe L. Ruiz Jr.

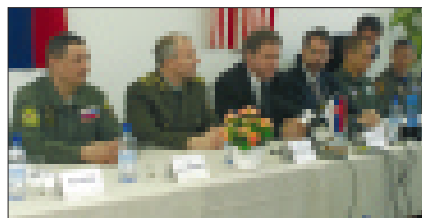
■**Warthog flight:** Martin E. Dahlke, flight leader, Marcus A. Benjamin, Joshua E. Benninger, Dena Denise Boonkian, Frank W. Edge, Tamiko Latrishia Foster, David A. Freeman, Michelle A. Higginbotham, Joseph M. Irwin, Brian L. Laro and Rhonda S. Mitchell.



Staff Sgt. Rich Romero

Making noise

Johann Bungert, of the civil engineer environmental control element, shows Master Sgt. John St. Pierre, flight safety, how to hook up propane canisters to a sound cannon. Members of the Bird Aircraft Strike Hazard program at Spangdahlem used the no-fly day March 31 to test the cannon's effectiveness on keeping birds off the flightline and taxiways. The cannon pictured is one of four the base bought last year, but hadn't tested until recently. Two bird strikes within the past two weeks has placed a higher priority on the BASH program here. Preliminary results indicate these particular models don't have the necessary deterrent factor. In addition to sound cannons, BASH team members are exploring the possibility of filling the standing water around the airfield to keep bugs and rodents away, thus eliminating the birds food source. Officials agree one method alone won't work to keep birds off the grassy infields.



Senior Airman Esperanza Berrios

Slovak and U.S. air forces members answer questions during a press conference Saturday.

Slovakia

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also be flying low-altitude tactical navigation and first-run attacks on targets at the range."

In an earlier press conference this year, Lt. Col. Chip Shepherd, 16th Air Force assistant director of operations, said the opportunity to go to Slovakia also allows the U.S. Air Forces in Europe to shorten the travel distance and provides an attractive logistical option to pre-position people and equipment for quality training. USAFE currently is required to travel as far as Spain, Turkey and Tanisia to use air-to-ground ranges.

In addition to the flying schedule, an open house April 8 is planned as well as visits to local schools and combined chapel services.

A meeting among Slovaks and a panel of Spangdahlem troops is scheduled to share ideas and information. The goal is to establish a first-hand relationship between the U.S. and Slovak air forces.



Linda Thompkins stacks glasses in the Airmen's Attic.

Volunteers

April set aside to honor those who give their time

By Angelique Robinson
 Family support center

National Volunteer Month (April) offers the Eifel community a chance to thank all the volunteers who contribute to the quality of life in the area.

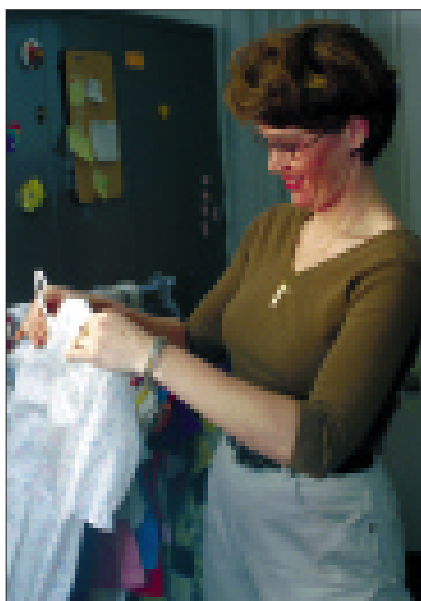
Literally hundreds of people, young and old, volunteer in area schools, the hospital, back and front offices, within the local German community, sporting events and other locations throughout Spangdahlem and Bitburg.

National Volunteer Month provides a method for the community to encourage these volunteers to keep up their efforts. Volunteering helps bridge gaps between diverse populations, create lasting relationships and set good examples for children while making the community a better place to live, work and play.

Many agencies at Spangdahlem AB couldn't function without the help of volunteers, said Daniel Shulaw, family support center director.

"Thousands of Airmen's Attic, loan locker and FSC customers annually couldn't be assisted if not for our outstanding volunteers," Shulaw said.

Shulaw is not the only one who feels that way. "With the help of our volunteers, pharmacy personnel can spend more time dealing with patient questions and concerns," said Staff Sgt. Michael Alleyne, pharmacy NCOIC. "The pharmacy



Photos by Staff Sgt. Laura Sparks

Tracey Wright, a volunteer with the family support center, hangs clothes in the Airmen's Attic.

would have a backlog of work in the area of clinic inspections and logging 558's without the help of our volunteers."

Community volunteers have an important role in educating children today, said Susan K. Ussery, Bitburg Elementary School principal.

"Their (volunteers) life experiences, knowledge and expertise can have a tremendous impact in the classroom," she said. "It is true that long ago children were educated by their community, but at Bitburg Elementary School, our students are still being educated by their community."

While volunteering is an act of giving, there's also the opportunity to receive. It provides a sense of satisfaction and a feeling that they're making a difference. Whether people volunteer weekly or yearly, the time and effort will make a difference.

For information about volunteer opportunities, call Zeno Henninger, volunteer resource manager, at 453-7491.

Public health meets needs of community

By Master Sgt. Kenneth Smithee
 Public health flight NCOIC

Most people simply don't understand public health's role in the community, or the benefit the profession has uncovered during the past 100 years.

In 1900, 30 percent of all deaths occurred among children age 5 or younger, while today that number is less than 1.4 percent. The leading cause of death in the early 1900's was pneumonia, tuberculosis, diarrhea and enteritis. Today, heart disease and cancer are responsible for more than 55 percent of deaths.

Childhood vaccines have immensely improved the health of America, especially in helping children survive the first five years. In 1900, there were 48,164 smallpox cases, today there are none. There were more than 500,000 measles cases in 1900 while only 87 (almost all in adults) in 1999. Polio, diphtheria, pertussis, mumps, tetanus and rubella all have been reduced by more than 90 percent from 1900 levels.

Workplaces are safer, too. In 1912, more than 21,000 Americans died on the job compared to only 5,100 in 1997. During this same time, the number of workers on the job increased from 39 million to 130 million.

When all the improvements to workplace practices, childhood vaccinations, disease management and more are combined the resulting benefit is Americans live 25 years longer today than they did in 1900.

Locally, public health inspects food at all on-base restaurants, monitors workplaces, works with the immunization clinic, provides health education to the public, aggressively investigates disease cases for the source, and works closely with multiple federal, state, and foreign public health agencies.

The staff at the Eifel public health office asks people to remember all they do during National Public Health Week, which ends Saturday.